

Caregiver Connection

November 2011

A monthly publication for Washington state foster and adoptive families and relative caregivers.
WASHINGTON DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES, CHILDREN'S ADMINISTRATION



See page 4 for more information.

Extra help along the journey

It was one of those rare sunny summer evenings in Western Washington, the temperature surprisingly still hovering near 80, as 16 foster parents gathered in Federal Way on a Friday in early September.

They came together to share a meal, support each other and get training to help better care for the children placed in their homes, many of who came with them.

This group was many of the 50+ support and hub groups built around the state in recent years to help keep foster parents connected.

"Our real passion is that this is really community driven," said Kathy Haugland, a foster parent from Auburn who works as a recruiter/liaison for Fostering Together, a program of Olive Crest.

Olive Crest contracts with the state to help build and maintain support groups in Region 2; Lutheran Community Services provides the same services in Region 1 and in Region 3 South. Foster Care Resource Network

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1624 Statewide Regional Foster Parent Representatives

REGION 1 NORTH

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REGION 3 NORTH

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Marcie Miess
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360-880-5330

Washington State's Kinship Navigators

Serving grandparents and relatives raising children

SOUTHEAST WASHINGTON

Asotin, Benton, Columbia, Franklin, Garfield, Kittitas, Yakima, and Walla Walla Counties: Catholic Family and Child Services – Yakima
KINSHIP NAVIGATOR: Mary Pleger,
mpleger@ccyakima.org; 509-965-7100
or 1-800-246-2962

Benton, Franklin, Columbia, Garfield, Walla Walla, and Asotin Counties Counties
KINSHIP NAVIGATOR: (Also Spanish Speaking)
Tina Khabir*, tkhabir@ccyakima.org; 509-946-4645,
Ext. 2021

Yakima and Kittitas Counties
KINSHIP NAVIGATOR: Mary Pleger,
mpleger@ccyakima.org; 509-965-7100
or 1-800-246-2962

Yakama Nation: Yakama Nation Area Agency on Aging
KINSHIP NAVIGATOR: Karen Cummings*,
kcummings@yakama.com; 509-865-1454

*Funded by Federal Family Connections Grant

CENTRAL WASHINGTON

Chelan, Douglas, Okanogan, Grant, Lincoln, and Adams Counties: Catholic Family and Child Services
KINSHIP NAVIGATOR: Jennifer Santillan,
jsantillan@ccyakima.org; 1-509-662-6761, Ext. 4557
or 1-800-261-1094

SOUTHWEST WASHINGTON

Clark, Cowlitz, Klickitat, Skamania, Wahkiakum Counties: Children's Home Society, Southwest Washington region
KINSHIP NAVIGATOR: Tammy Bedlion,
Tammyb@chs-wa.org; 360-695-1325, Ext. 4214

EASTERN WASHINGTON

Ferry, Pend Oreille and Stevens Counties: Rural Resources
KINSHIP NAVIGATOR: Vicki Pontecorvo,
vpontecorvo@ruralresources.org; 509-684-3932
(part-time)

Spokane County: Elder Services – Spokane Mental Health
KINSHIP NAVIGATOR: Angela Andreas,
aandreas@smhca.org; 509-458-7450, Ext. 3007

Whitman County: Council on Aging and Human Services
KINSHIP NAVIGATOR: Amanda Rich,
coaamanda@qwestoffice.net; 509-397-4305, Ext. 102

PUGET SOUND

King County: Senior Services of Seattle – King County
KINSHIP NAVIGATOR: Helen Sawyer,
helens@seniorservices.org; 206-727-6264

Lewis, Mason and Thurston Counties: Family Education and Support Services
KINSHIP NAVIGATOR: Lynn Urvina, KinNavigator@qwestoffice.net; 360-754-7629 or 1-877-813-2828
SPANISH SPEAKING NAVIGATOR: Rosa Venancio,
fessassist@qwestoffice.net; 360-754-7629
or 1-877-813-2828

Pierce County: HopeSparks

KINSHIP NAVIGATOR: Rosalyn Alber,
ralber@hopesparks.org; 253-565-4484, Ext. 105
KINSHIP NAVIGATOR: Jessie Holden,
jholden@hopesparks.org; 253-565-4484, Ext. 104

NORTHWEST WASHINGTON

Whatcom County: Northwest Regional Council (AAA)
KINSHIP NAVIGATOR: Laina Berry,
BerryLS@dshs.wa.gov; 360-676-6749 (part-time)

STATE CONTACT

Hilari Hauptman, Aging and Disability Services Administration, DSHS, Hilari.hauptman@dshs.wa.gov;
1-800-422-3263 or 360-725-2556

KINSHIP CARE IN WASHINGTON STATE WEBSITE www.dshs.wa.gov/kinshipcare

List updated 9/13/2011

provides similar services in Region 3 North. Support groups are sometimes called hubs. Think of the concept of a wheel: it has a hub in the middle connecting spokes around the outer wheel.

What makes this support group work is they get their training, share a meal with other foster parents and child care is provided, Haugland said. "The kids get to come here and I don't have to get a sitter," said Carrie Driscoll, 34, who with her husband Matt and their two biological children are now delighted to be adopting their foster child. And, she added, "all that hard stuff you run into, somebody has the answers. We get information we might not be able to otherwise."

Scott Marshall, a luthier (he repairs violins) and his wife Trish were at the meeting with three little ones. They were trying to balance the tasks of feeding the kids dinner, eating their own meal, and talking about why they attend this and other support groups in the area.

"There is so much about it we like, being with other foster parents and talking about our needs with all the challenges," Scott said. "It's very, very good and very helpful."

Scott said they come to learn, but after three years as foster parents, they have experiences they can share as well.

"We get training we need, but we have experiences, we can share," Scott said. After dinner, the kids go into a supervised room to play and the adults go into a nearby room to learn. The training this Friday night was particularly timely because it came just at the start of the school year. It covered three different kinds of learning styles, audio, visual and haptic (refers to the sense of touch), taught by a trainer for the Sylvan Learning Center.

The support groups are not all the same. The Seattle-based Mockingbird Society has "constellations" of foster parents that have proven to be very successful.

"They really have evolved and it's because of the people involved," said Dru Powers, Kathy's counterpart in Spokane. "They have good ideas and you just let it go. They know what they need way more than anyone else."

However support groups are run, the benefits are many. In addition to the networking and training, caregivers can exchange resources. And during this hub group, one potential foster parent was filling out paperwork, with the opportunity to meet those who are already licensed and caring for children.

"It's extra help along the journey," Haugland said.

Said Dru: "You need to connect so people don't think you're weird. It's a totally different lifestyle."

We all need somebody to lean on

Foster parent liaison Kathy Haugland may be half the age of her counterpart Dru Powers and they may live an entire state apart, but they share a common passion – helping foster parents and caregivers.

Dru, 77, who now lives in Hermiston, Ore. but works out of Spokane and Kathy 38, lives in Auburn and works with private agencies that have contracts with the state. They help build and maintain hub and support groups, help foster parents maneuver their way through a big child welfare system and troubleshoot issues as they arise.

"I have a passion for helping," Kathy said. "And I have become a better foster parent because of my work as a liaison.

Kathy and her husband Irwin are parents to six kids, two biological, three adopted and one in a long term foster care agreement. They have been foster parents for four years.

"I was just really wanting to help children," she said of getting started in foster care.

When Dru started taking care of kids 33 years ago, "I had no intention of becoming a foster parent," she said. But when her daughter asked if a neighbor child could come live with them, that child led to many more and she has taken care of probably 25 children throughout the three decades since. She invests a lot in each child in her care. "They all stayed quite a while," she said. She takes older teens – "I like teaching them how to live," she said.

As with many foster parents, she said the work is a two-way street.

"I think having kids around keeps your mind young and vibrant and active," she said.

In addition to helping build and maintain hubs, Haugland and Powers also provide advice and information to foster parents who have questions or issues related to the kids in their care. They can be a shoulder to lean on and a vehicle to resolve problems. Kathy said many times, her job is just "listening to them and de-escalating issues," she said. "Often people don't know they need you, until they need you."

One of her mentors was the extraordinary liaison and foster/adoptive parent Ruth Graham, who also works for Olive Crest doing licensing. And Kathy says she has a great partnership with the Division of Licensed Resources, particularly with licenser Kim Johnson.

Dru answered an ad in the Spokane paper in 1986 or 1987 when she started her journey as a liaison. She started a "Coffee Time" group many years ago that is still going. She said it is important to have someone like her and the other liaisons who are current or former foster parents available to help.

"You need a like thinking person," she said. "We foster parents have a different mindset. We look at things differently."



Dru Powers



Kathy Haugland

Governor's scholarship for foster youth

Applications for the Governors' Scholarship for Foster Youth are still open, and the deadline for applications is approaching on November 18, 2011.

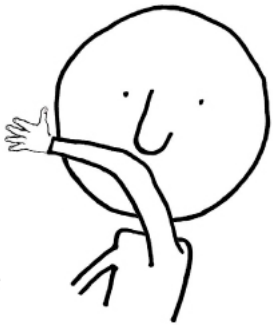
If you're interested, or know of any students who may be eligible, additional information about the scholarship and how to apply is listed below:

Washington State Governors' Scholarship for Foster Youth:

- The Governors' Scholarship provides \$2,000 to \$4,000 per year, for up to five years, for youth who are seniors in high school, and have or will emancipate from foster care in Washington State to attend college. Please take a moment to review the [eligibility information](#) on our website if you have students who may be eligible.
- The application is available in PDF, and can be printed by clicking [here](#), or by clicking the link at the bottom of our [website](#). Applications must be postmarked by Friday, November 18, 2011.
- Additional information about the Governors' Scholarship is available on our [website](#). If you have any questions, please contact me at jryan@collegesuccessfoundation.org or 1-877-655-4097.
- The website for the College Success Foundation is www.collegesuccessfoundation.org



TIP
Cover the nose and mouth with a tissue when coughing/sneezing or cough/sneeze into the shirt sleeve or elbow when no tissue is available.



That time of year again

Get vaccinated against the flu

The best way to protect against the flu each year is to get vaccinated. A vaccine is made available each year that protects against the three influenza viruses that are likely to be the most common during that season. It is recommended that all children that are 6 months or older should receive the seasonal influenza vaccine each year. Some children under the age of 8 may need to receive 2 doses this season; this should be discussed with their doctor. Many people are worried that they can get the flu from the influenza vaccination, but this is not possible due to the way the vaccine is created.

We know you want to provide the best care for the child in your home it is important to follow the recommendation of the child's doctor. The influenza vaccine is available in your community now; please call your doctor to set up an appointment as soon as possible.

Stay home when sick: Symptoms of the flu typically include fever (100 degrees Fahrenheit or above orally), cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, and feeling very tired. Some people may also vomit or have diarrhea. Children and staff with a flu-like illness should stay home for 24 hours after they no longer have a fever (without having to use fever-reducing medicines). Note: Aspirin should NEVER be given to children under age 19. Cough and cold medicines should not be given to children under age 6 without physician guidance. Foster care licensing standards regarding medication must be followed.

Hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette: Focus on the importance of the basic influenza prevention practices of staying home when sick; frequent hand washing with soap and water; and covering the nose and mouth with a tissue when coughing/sneezing or cough/sneeze into the shirt sleeve or elbow when no tissue is available.

For more information on influenza visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/> For more information on posters and other materials on influenza visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at www.cdc.gov/flu/freeresources/print.htm#parent

*Adapted from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): Technical Report for State and Local Public Health Officials and School Administrators on CDC Guidance for School (K-12) Responses to Influenza during the 2009-2010 School Year.

Polly wants a court date

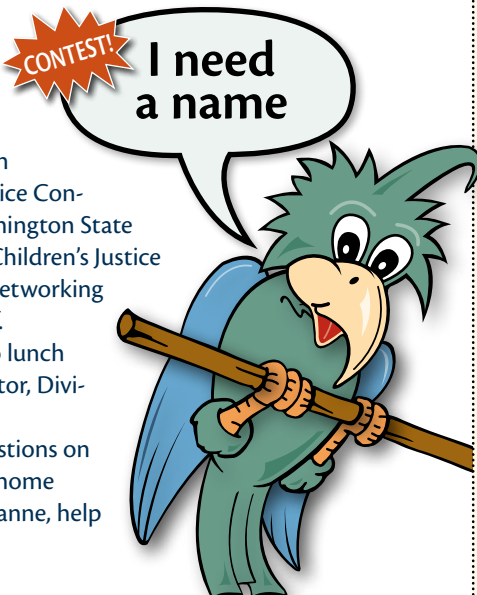
As a way of helping caregivers remember to ask their social worker about court dates scheduled for children in their care, this friendly parrot will frequently appear in the Caregiver Connection. The parrot will share a quick message to help jog your memory to ask about and plan to attend the next court hearing!

Please help us name the parrot. Name suggestions must be submitted by e-mail to Bob Partlow at: bob.partlow@dshs.wa.gov. The "Name the Court Parrot" contest will run through December 15, 2011 at 5:00 p.m. Who is eligible to enter? Any foster parent or relative caregiver, 18 and over, who receives the Caregiver Connection. State employees are not eligible. Please remember to include your name and contact information with your submission. A committee will review all entries and select the winner. The winner will be announced in the January edition.

The winner will receive one free scholarship for registration and two free nights at the Hyatt Hotel in Seattle to attend the Children's Justice Conference May 13-14, 2012 at the Washington State Convention Center in Seattle. The Children's Justice Conference is a great training and networking opportunity for caregivers and staff.

The winner will also be treated to lunch with Jeanne McShane, Acting Director, Division of Licensed Resources.

So if you have questions or suggestions on licensing, caregiver needs/support, home studies, or you'd just like to meet Jeanne, help us name that parrot!



Get connected to a support group or talk to a foster parent liaison

Here are the people to contact in your area:

REGION 1 NORTH

Dru Powers: 509-928-6697; dru.powers@lcsnw.org

Counties: Adams, Asotin, Columbia, Ferry, Garfield, Grant, Lincoln, Okanogan, Pend Oreille, Spokane, Stevens, Whitman

REGION 1 SOUTH

Lila Rose: 509-969-8554; lrose@lcsnw.org

Rosy Nechodom: 509-382-2445; rnechodom@lcsnw.org

Counties: Benton, Chelan, Douglas, Franklin, Kittitas, Klickitat, Yakima, Walla Walla

REGION 2 NORTH

Shala Crow: 360-220-3785; fosterhearts@hotmail.com

Counties: Island, San Juan, Skagit, Snohomish, Whatcom

REGION 2 SOUTH

Stephanie Swallow: 206-762-1046; ptlswallow@comcast.net

County: King

REGION 3 NORTH

Lyn Okarski: 253-473-9252; fostercarerenet@aol.com

Elizabeth Griffin Hall: 253-473-9252 or 360-990-9955; elizanngriffin@aol.com

Counties: Pierce, Kitsap

REGION 3 SOUTH

Monica Davis: 360-430-1510; mdavis@lcsnw.org

Counties: Clallam, Cowlitz, Clark, Grays Harbor, Jefferson, Lewis, Mason, Pacific, Skamania, Thurston, Wahkiakum

Important numbers to know when you take care of children in out-of-home care

Foster Parent and Caregiver Crisis and Support Line: 1-800-301-1868

ON-GOING AND CRISIS SUPPORTS FOR FOSTER PARENTS

Under contracts with the state, three private agencies are working to build supports for you within the foster care community. Supports include hubs, support groups, and matching new foster parents with veteran foster parents. To get connected:

- If you live in Eastern Washington, the Olympic Peninsula down through Pacific County or from Thurston County to Clark County, call 1-888-794-1794.
- If you live in King County, call the Fostering Together liaison, 206-850-4420. If you live in Region 2 North (counties north of King County), call the Fostering Together liaison 360-220-3785.
- If you live in Pierce or Kitsap counties, call 253-473-9252.
- If you live in King County, the Friends of Youth CARE program provides short-term counseling, education and support to help you care for your most difficult children. 1-888-263-3457 or 206-915-0459.

Family Help Line: 1-800-932-HOPE or www.parenttrust.org. The Family Help Line is a free, statewide training and referral line for the families of Washington state. Last year, the Family Help Line received more than 5,000 calls and requests for information. Calls can last up to 90 minutes and parents can call as often as needed.

The **Fostering Well-Being Care Coordination Unit** can help answer health-related questions or help you work on health related issues with children/youth in your care. Contact information: 1-800-422-3263 or 360-725-2626 (8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.) or e-mail: dhsfbccu@dshs.wa.gov. Please take care not to include any identifying information about a child unless sent through a secure e-mail account.

Support for foster parents under investigation for allegations of abuse or neglect: Foster Parent Investigation Retention Support Team (FIRST) 253-219-6782. Monday through Saturday, 8:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m., or leave a message and receive a return call within 24 hours.

Foster Parent and Caregiver Crisis and Support Line: 1-800-301-1868

Mental Health Crisis Line Information: The crisis line telephone number for your county or region is available on the DSHS Mental Health Division website at www.dshs.wa.gov/mentalhealth/crisis.shtml

GENERAL FOSTER PARENT INFORMATION FOR THE STATE OF WASHINGTON

FPAWS: Foster Parent Association of Washington State is an all volunteer non-profit association. It is led by experienced caregivers who provide support and helpful services to all caregivers (foster, adoptive, and kinship) in Washington State. In addition, FPAWS advocates for caregivers with Washington's legislative officials, all levels of Children's Administration staff and other community service providers to enhance the child welfare system. Contact FPAWS at www.fpaws.org or 1-800-391-CARE (2273).

Kitsap and Pierce County information about becoming a foster parent or to receive foster parent support: Foster Care Resource Network, 253-473-9252. Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. or leave a message and receive a return call by the next business day.

RESOURCE INFORMATION AVAILABLE STATEWIDE

Get connected to information on resources in your area by calling 211 – a toll free number.

Girl Scouts of Western Washington: Fostering a Future: MeccaYS@girlscouts.org

Women, Infant and Children Program (WIC): www.parenthelp123.org/resources/food-resources/wic

Children's Administration Foster Parent Website: www.dshs.wa.gov/ca/fosterparents/

Children's Administration Foster Parent Training Website – Trainings are open to all licensed foster parents, licensed relative caregivers and unlicensed caregivers. For information about foster parent and caregiver training, check out: www.dshs.wa.gov/ca/fosterparents/training.asp

CHILDREN'S ADMINISTRATION FOSTER CARE LISTSERV

Join the 4,600 people who have subscribed to the List Serve <http://listserv.wa.gov/cgi-bin/wa?SUBED1=fosterparents&&A=1> for updated information on resources for the work you do in caring for children.

Family Planning Services are designed to help avoid unwanted or mistimed pregnancy and are available through your local Community Service Office (CSO). Each CSO has a full time Family Planning Nurse to help provide services to Medicaid eligible clients. There is also a Family Planning hotline number 1-800-770-4334.

Finding a medical provider

The Medicaid Purchasing Agency (MPA) and ProviderOne has a helpful new website for caregivers who need to locate a Medicaid provider for the children placed in their home. Just click on the link below, enter the town/county/clinic name and enter search. You will also be able to search by specialty. Thanks to ProviderOne for making our caregiver's job just a little bit easier! Go to the [website](#) to find a provider.

A celebration of new beginnings

Joyous occasions are not frequently celebrated in the courthouses of America. But this month will provide an exception. Celebrating Forever Families is one of those occasions that Children's Administration, adoptive parents, our judicial partners and the community can take joy in.

During July–June 2011, 1,676 young people found forever families in Washington State. During the month of November, we will celebrate National Adoption Day with festivities in Washington's courthouses along with celebrations in courthouses all over America. National Adoption Day is scheduled for Saturday, November 19th this year.

In Washington State last year, 22 counties held adoption celebrations with 207 adoptions finalized during National Adoption Month. More counties are expected to participate this year. Most of those celebrations will be held the week before November 18.

As we celebrate new beginnings for so many children and families, we are mindful there are still 1,574 legally free children awaiting their forever family.

Join us in celebrating the adoptions of children in your local community. And work with us to re-dedicate our efforts to ensure that each child and youth who still waits, will find a permanent, loving family and a place to call home.